

WINSTON CHURCHILL ON DISREGARDING THE GOLDEN RULE

CHURCHILL APPLIES OLD TRUTHS TO PROBLEMS OF MODERN SOCIETY

A Tragic Tale of the Undoing of a Stenographer by Her Employer as the Setting for a Social Study of Great Value

WE HAD been discussing the recent strikes and I. W. W. riots in the West. Of course, we regretted that such things were happening and we were trying to find out the reason for them. Doctor McFabre was inclined to think that the competitive organization of society was largely responsible. His thinking is tinged with the theories of the Christian Socialists, but his sound sense has thus far prevented him from accepting all that they teach.

"I sympathize with the wage-earners," he said. "If I were in their place I think I should feel like striking for better pay."

"Would you go as far as the I. W. W. agitators and insist that everything be done to the workers and plot to secure it for them?" I asked.

"I'd be tempted to do it," he admitted. "But I do not believe you would yield to the temptation," I said. "You would take with you into the ranks of the regular workers your belief in the Golden Rule, and that belief would prevent you from ever becoming a member of the I. W. W. The religion of that organization is greed, and it is seeking to cure the evils of society, if we assume that its leaders are sincere, by fighting the greed of capital with the greed of labor. Now, I do not believe that the salvation of so-

ciety is to be found in any gospel of selfishness."

"I don't think Doctor McFabre believes it, either," said Dick Owen.

"Of course he does not," said I. "No man who thinks beneath the surface falls into such an error. You know that when George Eliot said that there could be no perfect happiness without perfect self-forgetfulness she was only formulating the philosophy which lies at the bottom of every great religion and which must lie at the bottom of any plan for the salvation of society. Winston Churchill has perceived this truth, for he has written his latest novel around it. Churchill's novels are worth while, for he is attempt-



WINSTON CHURCHILL

ing to write a history of American society in a series of books that are having a deserved popularity. He has put two or three periods of our early history into fiction and he has attempted to interpret modern life in three or four other books. His new book is a study of social unrest in a New England manufacturing town. He makes one of his characters describe it as typical of the protest, the revolt, the struggle for self-realization that is beginning to be felt all over the world today, that is not yet focused and self-conscious, but groping its way, clothing itself in any philosophy that seems to fit it."

"We see the unrest all about us," Doctor McFabre remarked.

"Yes, and the tragedies which overtake those who are blindly seeking a way out of the heart," I said. "Churchill's heroine, Janet Bumpus, embodies the longings of hundreds of thousands of workers blindly seeking for the light. She is a most pathetic figure, for she is like some beautiful wild creature, born for the freedom of the forest, caught in a trap and beating its head against the chains. She is the daughter of an old family. Her father, an amiable old man without initiative, is gatekeeper in a textile mill. The daughter is a stenographer in the office of the manager. She lives in a four-room flat in a squalid street with her parents and her sister, but she longs for beautiful things. The manager is attracted to her and lusts after her. She has some self-respect and keeps him at a distance till he proposes marriage to her. Then he takes her to a fashionable hotel in Boston, where in a moment when her reason is clouded by her love she succumbs to him. On the same day her sister had fled to Boston with her own lover and had taken refuge in a disreputable house in the south end. Mr. Churchill thus exhibits the temptations which assail the working girl and the fate which hangs over her."

"But if the girls had been properly reared they would not have fallen," Doctor McFabre remarked.

"Granted," said I; "but the point that Mr. Churchill makes is that girls are not properly reared, that the conditions of their life in homes where there is grinding poverty make it difficult to keep alive the fundamental virtues. He goes even further when he describes Janet as a 'true modern' in that she was blind to the virtues of duty and self-sacrifice. Therein lies the tragedy of modern life, the breaking down of the old standards and the continual demand of men and women that society give them what they want. The girl feels a sense of outrage when she discovers that the mill manager wanted her only for his amusement. A strike breaks out—Mr. Churchill uses the famous Lawrence strike as the model for

the one he describes—and the girl associates herself with the I. W. W. agitators until she discovers that they are as greedy and as conscienceless as the man who brought about her own undoing."

"I gather that Churchill has not written a propagandist book in the interests of labor," Owen remarked.

"Far from that," I admitted. "It is not propaganda of any kind, unless one could call it propaganda for social righteousness. Two-thirds of the book deals with the life of Janet and her relations with her employer. This part is as depressing as the life of the workers in a mill town. Toward the end a new spirit manifests itself when he brings the social and industrial conditions of the mill town into contrast with the spirit that prevails in an adjoining village, the seat of a famous academy founded to keep the torch of learning alight. Janet wandered into the village one summer day and met by chance one of its choice spirits, a man of breadth of vision and tolerance of spirit. The experience was restful. She finds him in the mill town while the strike is in progress, feeding the children of the strikers. Going to his soup kitchen for relief from the atmosphere of selfishness which she breathes in the I. W. W. headquarters. She meets there a sympathetic woman who is working with the man. Finally she falls ill and is taken to a hospital in the village. While she convalesces she has frequent conversations with the sympathetic woman. She is told, what she had discovered for herself, that the ill of society cannot be cured by the simple formula of the I. W. W., which provides for a series of strikes for higher wages until the 'capitalist class' is destroyed and all the instruments of industry are in the hands of the workers. She is told also that everybody, even the capitalists, is willing to help the world along if only he can believe that what he is told to do will help, and she begins dimly to perceive that there is no possibility of betterment until employer and employe, laborer and capitalist, begin to think of the voluntary bestowal of service."

"Ah, I see," said Doctor McFabre slowly. "He is applying the teaching that he that would save his life will lose it and he that would lose his life will save it."

"That is about it," I admitted. "And that is why he calls his book 'The Dwelling Place of Light.' God is light, he says, the sympathetic woman says, and she explains that she likes to think of men and women seeking to grow toward Him."

Doctor McFabre picked the book up from the table and began turning the leaves. "Has I read it?" he asked.

"Certainly. You will find it worth your while. It is a tragic story of absorbing interest. And I should call it a great book, for the reason that Mr. Churchill has discussed a great problem with a sincere and earnest purpose to throw some light upon it. Janet is a character that will live, for there are thousands of young women who will recognize in her some phase of their own experience and some of their own aspirations."

GEORGE W. DOUGLAS.

THE DWELLING PLACE OF LIGHT. By Winston Churchill, author of "The Inside of the Cup" (New York: The Macmillan Company, \$1.00).

HE KILLED A FLY WITH A SIX-SHOOTER

Pleasant Trouble's Exploit One of Many Described by John Fox, Jr.

Kentucky mountain romances and the ever-ready stream of the moonshiner all ways can be depended upon to please the reader of modern fiction. And perhaps no person knows better how to write about Kentucky and moonshine than John Fox, Jr.

It is through the medium of a book of short stories redolent with quick-tempered characters and quick-triggered weapons that the author of the "Trail of the Lone-ome Pine" makes his reappearance in the literary field after an absence of four years.

He has this time chosen the Happy Valley people to portray life in the southern Appalachian range. They are real, these dwellers in the mountains; rugged and uncut-throat perhaps but red-blooded and hard-



JOHN FOX, JR.

musical, amusing and at times pitifully pathetic.

The collection of stories that Mr. Fox has presented for inspection center about St. Hilda's School and its teacher; the school being the solitary oasis of learning in the otherwise desolate vastness.

It is in and about the school figure the romances of the collection, and the compact of the boy Christopher, who brought up amid the still distillation of school life, as were his parents before him, afterward walks with a crutch. Pleasant Trouble, full of moonshine and temperment, was annoyed when there is also an appreciative tribute to the work of the late Moses Jacob Ezekiel, one of the greatest Jewish sculptors.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK 1917-18 has just come from the press. It is, as usual, indispensable to those who wish to keep themselves informed on the activities of the Jews, not only in America, but in the whole world. Besides the statistical tables brought up to date and the directories of the Jewish organizations, it contains articles on the Jews in Latin America, Jewish rights at an international congress, the Jewish war relief work and the new English translation of the Bible. There is also an appreciative tribute to the work of the late Moses Jacob Ezekiel, one of the greatest Jewish sculptors.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK 1917-18. Edited by Samuel D. Oppenheim for the American Jewish Archives, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society.

HOW A GIRL ACTS TO WIN A HUSBAND. Margaret Widmeyer Describes Process in a Charming Story of Friendly People.

Women are coming into the open with unusual frankness, and describing in print the extent to which they will go to get a husband. Mrs. Alice Duer Miller, in "Ladies Must Live," noticed on this page a few weeks ago, wrote about the fight of two experienced society women for a man and how he was won. Her novel was brilliantly cynical. Now comes Miss Margaret Widmeyer in "How a Girl Acts to Win a Husband," the story of the exploits of a demure young woman of nineteen, with no social experience save that which she has acquired in

the salon of her grandfather, a poet, whose guests are old people like himself and young poets who seek his patronage. She has been treated as a little girl all her life and her grandparents do not seem to be aware that she has grown up. The girl herself is hardly aware of it. Miss Widmeyer has her overboard a pair of young lovers saying soft nothings to each other. She then longs for friends of her own age. A series of unexpected events follows, the outcome of which is that the girl invents a lover and announces her engagement in order that she may visit some friends whom she had made at a summer resort. The lover, a man whom she has seen but once, turns up at the critical moment and he generously consents to play the part in order that she may have her visit. The story deals with how they both played their parts, the girl in love with the man and the man merely acting in order to deceive the spectators. Every woman will know in a general way what the girl did and every woman will also hope that she won the stakes for which she was playing. Those who read the story to find out will get much entertainment in the process. The characters, including the rose-garden husband and his wife of Miss Widmeyer's previous novel, are delightful people, kindly and sympathetic. It is a friendly book that will doubtless be immensely popular with girls of the sentimental age.

MISS MARGARET WIDMEYER

THE WIMBING-BING MAN. By Margaret Widmeyer, author of "The Rose-Garden Husband" (New York: Henry Holt & Co., \$1.25).

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THE MACMILLAN COMPANY Publishers NEW YORK

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LITTLE STAR GAZETTE. By Julia Augusta Schwartz. With four illustrations in color by Mabel Hunt. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, \$1.

Mere Spectra

Miss Knish and Mr. Morgan are collaborators who believe, with fine radicalism, that a poem is the better for being labeled "Cynic" or "that"; that cocktail and rotting nose and Madagascarian crabs are the essence of the imaginative, and that the jagged ends of verse libre are stouter than the dull regularities of a settled form. Miss Knish is "weary of salmon dawns and cinnamon sunsets" and has therefore set out to create a new world for herself in which such dull regularities of naturalism, is still highly unnatural. Now and then, by sheer torturing of their minds, the authors do produce a striking simile, a curiously interesting bit of color or a subtle thought. But generally the cliff outnumbers the grain.

SPECTRA. A book of poetic experiments. By Miss Knish and Emanuel Morgan. New York: Mitchell Kennerly.

The Jewish Year Book

The American Jewish Year Book for 1917-18 has just come from the press. It is, as usual, indispensable to those who wish to keep themselves informed on the activities of the Jews, not only in America, but in the whole world. Besides the statistical tables brought up to date and the directories of the Jewish organizations, it contains articles on the Jews in Latin America, Jewish rights at an international congress, the Jewish war relief work and the new English translation of the Bible. There is also an appreciative tribute to the work of the late Moses Jacob Ezekiel, one of the greatest Jewish sculptors.

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